



## **News Release**

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### **Community Gardens Get Funding Boost**

#### ***UDOH Offers Grants in Salt Lake and Weber Counties***

(SALT LAKE CITY) – Northern Utah’s community gardens are seeing green, thanks to \$30,000 in new grants offered by the Utah Department of Health (UDOH). Utah was one of just 13 states to receive the funding through a “Healthy States” grant from the National Governor’s Association. The grants are designed to support state efforts to combat the epidemics of obesity and unhealthy lifestyles.

“We are pleased to be able to offer this funding to those interested in improving the health of their neighborhoods through community gardening,” said UDOH Director of Health Promotion LaDene Larsen. “We believe giving people access to fresh fruits and vegetables and getting them physically active can make a big difference in their overall health,” she said.

Community gardens are developed by non-profit groups who want to make produce available to people in their neighborhoods. Residents plant and care for the crops and harvest them for themselves and others – often low-income families. Studies show community gardening promotes self-reliance, beautifies neighborhoods and provides recreation and relaxation for the people who work them.

Any public or private entity in Salt Lake and Weber Counties may apply for a mini-grant of \$500 to \$4,000. Preference will be given to projects that benefit low-income residents. Applications are due January 15, 2007 and awards will be announced in early February to give awardees time to prepare for the gardening season.

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To apply, visit the UDOH obesity website at [www.health.utah.gov/obesity](http://www.health.utah.gov/obesity) and download a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP also includes information on funding timelines and applicant resources, including a list of things to consider when starting a garden. You may also contact Lynda Blades, UDOH Physical Activity Coordinator, at (801) 538-6229 or [lblades@utah.gov](mailto:lblades@utah.gov) for more information.

For more information on community gardening, Wasatch Community Gardens (WCG), a non-profit leader in community gardening serving the Salt Lake Valley, will offer a seminar on Tuesday, December 5, from 6-8 p.m. The training will be held in Room 114 at Utah Department of Health, 288 North 1460 West, Salt Lake City. “The financial support and technical assistance offered through this program will turn ideas into productive gardens,” said Emily Aagaard, Executive Director of Wasatch Community Gardens.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public’s health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death; assuring access to affordable, quality health care; and promoting healthy lifestyles.*